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ABSTRACT

Motivated by an interest in developing a better understanding of the students who enter Victor Valley Community College (VVCC) (California) directly from high school, the study outlined in this document was guided by four main purposes: (1) to gain an understanding of the characteristics of these students as they enter the institution so that appropriate educational experiences and services can be planned; (2) to evaluate the effectiveness of outreach efforts by examining participation rates to the various service area public high schools; (3) to gain an understanding of their "journey" during the experience at VVCC--academic performance, persistence, academic achievement, etc.; and (4) to provide feedback to high school and high school districts on their graduates. The study encompassed 6,712 high school graduates who identified themselves as first-time college students and enrolled at VVCC at any time during the year in which they graduated. Data was extracted from the college's data warehouse system and included the following information on each student: year of graduation, gender, ethnicity, academic achievement, academic honors, awards, number of terms in attendance. The report concludes with a summary of significant findings that address issues of gender, ethnicity, academic level of entering students, and degree attainment statistics. (RC)

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VICTOR VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Research Report (No. 2002-02)

October 2002

Characteristics and Academic Performance of High School Students Attending VVC Directly After Graduation 1996-2001

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Characteristics and Academic Performance of High School Students Attending VVC Directly After Graduation

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Students that enter a community college directly from high school are an important segment of a college's population. These students are often enrolled full-time and therefore, have a tremendous impact on curriculum and class scheduling. A community college must take keen interest in this group because for most of these students a community college presents the only opportunity for pursuing higher education. For many communities the data is clear that the majority of this group is unlikely to go directly to a baccalaureate granting institution after high school. It is a well-established fact that for high schools in the Victor Valley, the majority of graduates are ineligible to attend four-year institutions due to a combination of inadequate admission test scores, inadequate GPAs and lack of college preparatory classes.

Given these factors it is critical that a community college have a solid understanding of the characteristics of this group of students. Equally, because we are close partners with high schools in the educational pipeline, it is important that high schools have feedback on their students that go on to higher education. This type of information can be invaluable for high school personnel in planning and development. This study was undertaken with the following purposes in mind:

1) Gain an understanding of the characteristics of these students as they enter the institution so that appropriate educational experiences and services can be planned.

2) Evaluate the effectiveness of outreach efforts by examining participation rates of the various service area public high schools.

3) Gain an understanding of their "journey" during the experience at VVC – academic performance, persistence, academic achievements etc.

4) Provide feedback to high schools and high school districts on their graduates.

METHOD

The following study encompassed 6,712 high school graduates with a graduation year from 1996 to 2001. This sample included high school graduates who registered at any time during the year in which they graduated. In addition, graduates were selected based upon their status as a first-time college student.

Data for the current study was extracted from a Sybase data warehouse system. The coding of variables was performed in SPSS, while Excel was used for aggregation and reporting purposes.

The following components were studied for each school/category:

1. Year of Graduation
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity
4. Academic Achievement (units attempted, units completed, grade points, GPA)
5. Academic Honors (Honor Roll = 3.000-3.499, Dean's List = 3.500-3.999, President's List = 4.000 GPA)
6. Assessment (mean score on each division of placement test)
7. Assessment (percent at college level was defined as: college level reading >= 76, college level writing (addition of reading and sentence scores) >= 200, college level math >= 63)
8. Awards (Number and percent of degrees and certificates as well as the number of terms to degree or certificate)
9. Number of terms in attendance
10. Number of graduates that attended VVC directly after graduation
11. Total graduates
12. Percentage of graduates that attended VVC directly after graduation

All data compiled for gender, ethnicity, high school and year of graduation, were gathered based upon the information submitted on the student's admission form. Academic achievement indicators, such as GPA, were based upon an aggregation of all terms in attendance at VVC. Academic honor percentages were based upon the highest honor status attained by a student during their first term. Scores and placement levels on the College Placement Test (CPT), designed by Accuplacer, were collected as of the graduates' first term as a registered college student. Therefore, if a student was administered the CPT while they were a concurrent student and then re-tested after registering as a first-time student, the score obtained as a first-time student would be used. If a student re-tested during their term as a first-time student, the latest score would be used. The mean number of terms to degree or certificate was based upon the first occurrence of a degree or certificate per graduate and included the summer intersession. In order for a term to be considered, the graduate must have received at least one letter grade (A, B, C, CR, D, F, NC, I, W, RD) during the term. In addition, this term could have been while the student was attending high school and VVC concurrently.

Analyses were performed for each of the service area public high schools (Apple Valley, Granite Hills, Hesperia, Lucerne Valley, Serrano, Silverado, Sultana and Victor Valley) as well as in an aggregated group. The analysis performed on "Alternative" high schools within our area consisted of Goodwill, Chaparral, Willow Park and Mojave. Private schools were analyzed separately and included Hesperia Christian, Victor Valley Christian, Lucerne Valley Christian, Desert Christian (Hesperia), Apple Valley Christian and Desert Christian (Apple Valley). An additional analysis was performed for the Academy of Academic Excellence (AAE). All other high schools, in or out of state, were aggregated under the category of "Other", and the "Overall" analysis represented every high school in the sample.

In addition to the previous analyses, tables were generated in order to view schools/categories by individual components.

OVERALL TRENDS AND OBSERVATIONS

- Gender ratios have remained relatively unchanged for all entering high school graduates in the last six years. However, on average, females from alternative schools account for 65.5% of their graduates attending VVC. This proportion is 10.4% higher than that seen in service area schools.
- While male proportions in service area public schools have remained relatively constant, the proportion of males for service area schools is 6.8% lower than that viewed for the "Other" category.
- The representation of Hispanic students increased moderately (+5.5%) for service area public schools from 1996 to 2001. However, the Hispanic representation at Serrano more than doubled from 1996 to 2000 (12.0% compared to 25.8%). Additionally, in 2001 nearly half of alternative school entering graduates are Hispanic. Taking into account all of the high schools, the Hispanic representation has increased 4.6% in the last six years.
- African-American representation for service area public schools and the overall category have been consistent over the years.
- Aside from Silverado, service area public schools show a decline in White representation. However, the "Other" category has revealed a modest increase (+6.3%) in the last six years.
- Nineteen ninety-six service area graduates have attempted more units (38.7) and completed more units (35.4) than graduates in any other category except for private.
- In the last six years, graduates from private institutions have maintained a higher average GPA (2.37) than any other compiled group in the study.
- Although the numbers are relatively small, Lucerne Valley graduates have earned the highest average GPA (2.54) for a service area school during the last six years.
- Of the service area schools represented every year by an honor roll award, Serrano revealed the highest average percentage of students (8.3%) attaining this award. This percentage is the same as that viewed for private schools and a close second to the "Other" category (8.5%).
- From 1996 to 2001, service area schools as well as the "Overall" category have revealed decreases in English CPT scores whereas math CPT scores on all components have increased.
- Decreases in the number of graduates assessed at college level are viewed for all categories. In contrast, the 2001 Serrano graduates revealed modest gains in reading, writing and math.
- Private school graduates have shown more readiness for college level English than service area public schools as indicated by a higher percentage of students being placed in college level reading and writing. However, graduates from service area public institutions have shown the highest percentage of graduates being ready for college level math.
- On average, 49.3% of service area school graduates are ready for college level reading, 12.3% are ready for college level writing and 3.3% are ready for college level math.

- Including all categories, the average number of terms to degree is between 6.1 and 8.3 while the number of terms to certificate is between 5.0 and 7.7.
- 19.3% of all graduates in 1996 earned a degree as of 2001. Private school graduates earned the highest percentage of degrees (27.3) while the highest percentage for a service area school was achieved by Apple Valley (24.7).
- As viewed in 1996, 13.9% of the graduating class from alternative schools earned a certificate as of 2001. In this same year, Victor Valley (7.9%) achieved the next highest percentage of graduates who earned a certificate.
- For 2001, with exception of Serrano and Hesperia that experienced some decrease, all service area public schools experienced increases in graduates attending VVC when compared to 2000.
- Over the six years, the largest average proportional representation of graduates who attended VVC directly after graduation were from Hesperia (43.7%), followed closely by the Academy of Academic Excellence (43.1%) and Victor Valley (41.6%).
- Noteworthy increases from 1996 to 2001 in the number of students attending VVC directly after graduation are: Lucerne Valley (+57.1%), Academy for Academic Excellence (+18.6%), and Serrano (+12.0%), as well as Alternative (+19.4%) and Other (+105.8%) school groupings.

EXCELSIOR EDUCATION CENTER	GRADUATION YEAR					
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
GENDER						
Male			30.4%	28.1%	41.4%	32.1%
Female			69.6%	71.9%	58.6%	67.9%
ETHNICITY						
African American			8.7%	9.4%	10.3%	7.5%
American Indian			8.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Asian			0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Filipino			0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	1.9%
Hispanic			21.7%	25.0%	31.0%	26.4%
Mid. Eastern			0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%
Pacific Islander			0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
White			60.9%	59.4%	51.7%	62.3%
Other Non-White			0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Unknown/Nonrespondent			0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	1.9%
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT						
Mean Units Attempted			30.6	30.0	23.4	15.5
Mean Units Completed			26.7	27.2	19.8	13.3
Mean Grade Points			82.6	80.9	66.0	44.6
Mean G.P.A.			2.30	2.45	2.29	2.51
Honor Roll			4.3%	3.1%	0.0%	3.8%
Dean's List			0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
President's List			4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%
ASSESSMENT						
Mean CPT Reading			73.4	67.9	69.7	70.9
Mean CPT Sentence			79.6	70.4	77.8	77.6
Mean CPT Arithmetic			61.5	51.4	50.5	59.3
Mean CPT Algebra			49.8	67.3	41.4	54.2
Mean CPT CLM			30.3	30.5	17.0	29.4
College Level Reading			50.0%	33.3%	32.0%	51.1%
College Level Writing			16.7%	3.7%	8.0%	8.5%
College Level Math			0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
AWARDS						
# of Degrees Awarded			2	0	1	1
% of Attendees Receiving Degrees			8.7%	0.0%	3.4%	1.9%
Mean # of terms to Degree			6.0	N/A	6.0	7.0
# of Certificates Awarded			0	1	0	2
% of Attendees Receiving Certif's			0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	3.8%
Mean # of terms to Certificate			N/A	8.0	N/A	4.5
Mean # of Terms in Attendance			4.5	4.3	3.3	2.2
***Number that attended VVC directly after graduation**			23	32	29	53
****Total Graduates**			130	120	103	181
Percent that attended VVC directly after graduation			17.7%	26.7%	28.2%	29.3%

* First time, high school graduates who registered at any time during the year in which they graduated.

** Source: http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/

NOTE: Blank cells represent no data collection for this school.

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